CA - PMM

Project Name: TANF/FS Federal Reporting Data

OCIO Project #:
Department: California Department of Social Services
Revision Date:

Concept Statement

Description

Brief description of the proposed project:

The Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) is the universe from which the TANF samples are drawn in order to collect Federal and state characteristic and work participation data for mandated Federal and state reporting. Additionally the Food Stamps (FS) samples are drawn from the County Performance Sample (CPS). Both files contain authorizations but not issuances for each program and does not fully comply with Federal requirements. This project is focused on establishing better universe sources for TANF/FS sampling purposes by moving to the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system. EBT contains issuance information for both programs which complies with Federal requirements.

Need Statement

High Level Functional Requirements:

The identified solution must fully comply with Federal requirements to provide characteristics and work participation/payment accuracy information for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/FS programs. Key to this charge is to have the ability to accurately identify TANF/FS issuances in a timely manner. Eliminating these barriers will provide cost savings and workload relief for State/County reviewers.

What is Driving This Need?

The following issues have been identified with the current sampling frames: (1) Incomplete and not truly representative of the total statewide caseloads which are not fully compliant with Federal standards; (2) Based on authorizations not issuances; (3) Must oversample by approximately 20% to account for cases that were inaccurately sampled; (4) Data files are large and costly to download each month; (5) Data is not entered/updated in a timely manner; and (6) ad hoc data analyses are complex due to the incompleteness of the current sample universe sources.

Risk to the Organization if This Work is Not Done:

Because of the potential inaccuracies in the data, CDSS is vulnerable to Federal penalties and sanctions if these issues are not addressed. Inaccurate reporting could lead to a decrease/loss of TANF/Food Stamp program revenue. Penalties could be as great as $340 million annually for the FS program and up to four percent of the TANF block grant per quarter.

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Benefit Statement

Intangible Benefits

Process Improvements (describe the nature of the process improvement):

Using the EBT system for the sampling frame for TANF/FS reporting would allow for more accurate and timely data. The proposed system is based on issuances versus authorizations which is consistent with Federal requirements. Currently CDSS uses multiple data sources for reporting purposes due to the incompleteness of the MEDS/CPS files. The EBT sampling frame would allow all reporting to be performed from a single data source. Also, a more accurate sampling frame provides better characteristic, TANF work participation rate, and FS payment error rate data for stakeholders.

Other Intangible Benefits:

A more complete sampling frame provides the following benefits: (1) Sampling methodology could be streamlined and made more efficient because the EBT system would reduce the need for oversampling; (2) Data analyses could be simplified and would be less subject to error; (3) eliminate the need for multiple data sources.

Tangible Benefits

Revenue Generation (describe how revenue will be generated):

N/A

Cost Savings (describe how cost will be reduced):

Workload relief to state/county reviewers up to 20% due to reduction in oversampling and simplification of the sampling methodology.

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Cost Avoidance (describe the cost and how avoided):

Risk Avoidance (describe the risk and how avoided):

CDSS has been informed of the need to find alternate data sources for the TANF sampling frames. Since then, attempts were made to identify viable data sources, but nothing has been found that satisfies the requirements. Continuing to use MEDS as the basis for the sampling frames puts California at risk for incurring Federal penalties. Failure to submit complete, accurate, or timely data could result in penalties as great as $340 million annually for the FS program and up to four percent of the TANF block grant per quarter (as required by 45 CFR 262.1(a)(3)).

Improved Services:

State/county reviewers would not be required to collect data on as many cases because the EBT system would more accurately identify the target population and thereby reduce the need to oversample (draw replacement samples for those samples that were inaccurately drawn).

Consistency

"No" Responses		Rationale	Action Required
Enterprise Architecture			
Business Plan			
Strategic Plan			

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Impact to Other Agencies

Nature of Impact to Other Agencies

Agency: County Welfare Department

Describe the nature of the impact:

Reduction in TANF/FS data collection workload due to better sampling universe with EBT.

Agency: Administration for Children and Families/Food and Nutrition Services (Federal agencies)

Describe the nature of the impact:

Provision of more complete and accurate sampling frame which complies with Federal requirements.

Agency: Other stakeholders using the data (CDSS, Legislature, County Welfare Agencies)

Describe the nature of the impact:

TANF/FS characteristic and work participation rates/payment error rates produced from the samples will be more accurate due to the improved accuracy of the sampling frame.

Agency:

Describe the nature of the impact:

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Impact to Other Programs

Nature of Impact to Other Programs

Program:
Describe the nature of the impact:

Program:
Describe the nature of the impact:

Program:
Describe the nature of the impact:

Program:
Describe the nature of the impact:

Solution Alternatives

Alternative 1:
Move from MEDS/CPS as the sampling universes for the TANF and FS programs to EBT.

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Technical Considerations for Alternative 1:

(1) Need authority to request EBT to make necessary improvements to the system when problems are identified (e.g., monitoring of input files from counties, additional edits and procedures to improve data quality for sampling purposes); (2) MEDS files may still need to be used to provide additional required characteristic data elements; (3) Existing sampling programs must be modified and tested in order to move from MEDS/CPS to EBT.

ROM Cost:	to	**Note: high end of range must not exceed 200% of low end of range**

Alternative 2:

Technical Considerations for Alternative 2:

ROM Cost:	to	**Note: high end of range must not exceed 200% of low end of range**

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Alternative 3:

Technical Considerations for Alternative 3:

ROM Cost:	to	**Note: high end of range must not exceed 200% of low end of range**

Recommendation

Comparison:

Alternative 1	ROM Cost	Risk
	$0 - $0	
Alternative 2	**ROM Cost**	**Risk**
	$0 - $0	
Alternative 3	**ROM Cost**	**Risk**
	$0 - $0	

Conclusions:

1	
2	
3	
4	

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Recommendation:

Project Approach *(if known)*

System Complexity:			System Business Hours: *(e.g., 24x7, 9am-5pm)* :	
Architecture	☐ Mainframe	☐ Client Server	☐ Web Based	Num. of New Databases:
Technology	☐ New	☐ New to Staff	☐ In-House Experience	Interfaces:
Implementation	☐ Central Site	☐ Phased Roll-out		Num. of Sites:
M & O Support	☐ Contractor	☐ Data Center	☐ Project	☐ Returned to Sponsor

Procurement Approach: *(consult with OSI Procurement Center)* — Number of Procurements:

Open Procurement? ☐ Yes ☐ No Delegated Procurement? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Scope of Contract ☐ Development ☐ Implementation ☐ M & O ☐ Other:

Anticipated Length of Contract: Years / extensions for years